



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Summary

About this Release

In 2000, 2003 and 2006, the Australian Bureau of Statistics conducted surveys on Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities. We analyse the data from these surveys to identify factors which may have influenced children's participation in organised sporting activities.

Initially we apply a simple age-period-cohort accounting model to the full dataset and several subpopulations of interest. This reveals evidence of strong age effects which are consistently observed, even for groups of children that report significantly different rates of participation. Between 2000 and 2006, average participation rates rose overall by more than three percentage points, but this was not uniformly observed over all subpopulations. In particular, no increase in participation was reported among children from more disadvantaged areas. No evidence of cohort effects was detected.

We then fit a logistic regression model to the data, supplementing the age, period and cohort effects with a range of observed socio-demographic characteristics pertaining to the child, the family and the neighbourhood. Significant age and period effects are confirmed, and factors such as gender, parents' employment status, country of birth and the relative socioeconomic status of the neighbourhood are found to be strongly associated with children's participation rates. Children who spend more time watching television and/or using computers are also found to be less likely to participate in organised sporting activities.

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